



Community Health Planning

Local boards of health play a critical leadership role in advocating for community health and in spearheading strategies and initiatives to improve community health. Community health planning happens on both a state and county level. Understanding the relationship between state-level initiatives and county-level initiatives is important so that you can carry out your duties as a local board of health member.

COMMUNITY-BASED HEALTH PLANNING IN IOWA - THE CHNA & HIP

Using a standard reporting tool the Community Health Needs Assessment and Health Improvement Plan (CHNA & HIP), every five years, local boards of health lead a community-wide discussion about their community's health needs and what can be done about them. A fundamental tenet of this effort is community participation in making decisions about improving the public's health and mobilizing support and resources for agreed-upon initiatives. Besides meeting the assessment and planning standards embodied in the Iowa Public Health Standards, the CHNA & HIP report provides health status information to the public and decision makers and also can rally the community around public health priorities. The counties' reports allow for a solid profile of the health priorities of the state and resources needed to address them.

Counties have the option of working together with other counties and submitting a report or reporting as a single county. The health improvement plan should be regularly reviewed to be sure that goals to address the health of the community are being met.

The report is organized around six overarching public health goals- preventing injuries; promoting healthy behaviors; strengthening the public health infrastructure; preventing epidemics and the spread of disease; protecting against environmental hazards; and preparing for, responding to, and recovering from public health emergencies. The assessment segment of the report (CHNA) outlines the results of the stakeholder discussion and community input. The health improvement plan (HIP) segment covers the specific goal or goals community stakeholders have set as a priority for action, who is responsible, the timeline, and its relation to one of the overarching goals.

The department supports the CHNA & HIP process with data assistance, resources, and training.

STATE HEALTH ASSESSMENT AND STATE HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The state health assessment and health improvement planning follow a similar pattern to the local process. The Iowa Department of Public Health leads a state health assessment using the results of the CHNA & HIP process. Additionally, the department considers statewide public health data, public health partner input, and national public health resources in completing the state health assessment.

The state health improvement plan covers the specific goals and strategies that statewide community stakeholders have identified as priorities for action. It also specifies who is responsible, the timeline, and the relation to one of the overarching public health goals. It is used by individuals or groups for various purposes such as improving collaborative efforts, guiding policy development, applying for and obtaining funding, and informing strategic planning at the department.